

CEQA Review Determination

The following are three descriptions of solid waste projects. As a group determine what the appropriate CEQA compliance requirement might be for each project. For example based on the information provided which project(s) could be exempted from the requirements of CEQA, which might require a Negative Declaration and which might require an EIR.

Be prepared to indicate your basis for making the determination.

If you find that additional information would be needed before making a final determination please be prepared to discuss what the information might need to include.

Please assign a group member to report out the result of your discussion to the rest of the class.

Project 1

SITE DESCRIPTION

The project is proposed to be partially located on previously filled areas of an existing 420 acre Class III landfill on a 600 acre property. The privately owned and operated landfill receives municipal solid waste and non-hazardous sludge from areas within and outside the county. The access road is directly off of a major highway; there is no dedicated interchange. The site is 4 miles north of a city with the approximate population of 250,000. The surrounding land is primarily wetlands and flat agricultural land. Prevailing winds are from the north to the south.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposal is for two 50 acre compost operations each receiving approximately 200,000 tons per year of wood waste greater than 1-inch in diameter directly from the landfill's waste stream and one receiving an additional 60,000-80,000 tons per year of sludge. One operation will mix sludge with wood waste in portions appropriate for effective composting. The second operation will compost only green material. The operations will each have an annual capacity of 80,000-100,000 tons. There will be no more than 500,000 cubic yards of material on either site at any one time. Only the feedstock and finished product will be stored on the fill areas, the windrows will not be on fill. Finished materials will be stored on site, packaged and transported to markets. The operations will be open to the public.

Four buildings, including three packaging and grinding buildings and one administrative office, and an 8,000 gallon storage tank are proposed to be shared by the operations. All the feedstock will come from existing waste entering the landfill or from new sources; some new truck trips would be created. There would also be some new vehicle trips by employees working at the site.

PREVIOUS CEQA DOCUMENTATION

An EIR for expansion of the landfill disposal area was completed 10 years ago. The EIR included strict traffic flow mitigations because of significant traffic impacts at the highway access road intersection, which are enforced by the solid waste facility permit.

Project 2

SITE DESCRIPTION

The privately owned and operated sanitary landfill in question is located in an unincorporated area of a bay area county 3 miles north of a major interstate freeway. The nearest population center is one mile east. It is situated at the top of a small watershed and there is a spring located in the drainage in the southern portion of the site. It encompasses 1 square mile (644 acres). The 342 acre of the site is used as open space, limited agriculture, and buffer zone use, the rest is dedicated to land filling solid waste.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The landfill's service area is increasing to include all potentially all Northern California communities. The tonnage amounts will not increase, nor the number of vehicle utilizing the site. The landfill is proposing to utilize 80 additional acres approved previously. The approval was for a Class III landfill design. The proposal is now for a Class II design (Sub Title D requirements took effect after the previous plan that require the design change). New waste types will be received that include dried industrial wastewater treatment (sewage) sludge, non-hazardous underground storage tank soils, pulp and paper mill waste, and treated shredded automobile waste. In addition the following wastes are proposed for load-by-load acceptance: asbestos; drilling muds; ash; soils with higher concentrations of petroleum by-products; septage and sludge with higher water contents; and industrial wastewater sludges.

PREVIOUS CEQA DOCUMENTATION

An EIR was completed 5 years previously that reviewed the 80 acre class III expansion. Waste types were described in the EIR as municipal solid waste and industrial wastes.

Project 3

SITE DESCRIPTION

This site is a landfill in a rural county that is owned and operated by the county. The landfill services unincorporated areas of the county and several small cities in the county. An average of 50 tons per day of municipal solid waste, green waste, and construction and demolition waste are received at the site. Tires are also accepted, stored in a trailer, and then transported off site. Green waste is chipped on site and sent to a biomass facility. The permit for the facility states that "The waste will be covered with soil on a daily basis."

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The site operator has recently started using green material for daily cover. This activity was not described in the Report of Disposal Site Information (RDSI) or in the Solid Waste Facility Permit (permit).

PREVIOUS CEQA DOCUMENTATION

A Negative Declaration was developed for the last permit revision for the landfill. The Negative Declaration included a list of waste types received for disposal and processing of green waste for biomass.